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Senate

The Senate met at 9:30 a.m. and was called to order by the President pro tempore (Mr. HATCH).

PRAYER

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. Today's opening prayer will be offered by Chris Justice, Pastor of Lee Park Church in Monroe, NC.

The guest Chaplain offered the following prayer:

Let us pray.

Father in Heaven, Your Name is great. You are sovereign and holy. You offer Christ-centered salvation and peace. You are ever present in our time of need.

We thank You for the great gift of the United States of America. We ask You to protect, guide, and direct the Members of the U.S. Senate.

For all the issues that might divide us, I pray that Your Spirit would enlighten us and convict us to fulfill Your call to love one another as You have loved us.

May it be true that in all our ways we would acknowledge You so that You would make our paths straight. May it be true that we would desire and actively pursue that Your will be done and Your Kingdom come, on Earth now as it is in Heaven. May it be true that we would be careful to give You all the praise, honor, and glory due You.

We pray to You and we praise You in Jesus's Name. Amen.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The President pro tempore led the Pledge of Allegiance, as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. HELLER). The Senator from North Carolina.

WELCOMING THE GUEST CHAPLAIN

Mr. BURR. Mr. President, I rise today to welcome a constituent, the senior pastor of Lee Park Church in Monroe, NC, Chris Justice, to the Senate.

Chris's story is an inspiring one. In 2005, Chris was a well-known broadcaster on dual television stations in Charlotte, NC. In November of that year, Chris was called by the Lee Park Church, a congregation of 50 faithful, at which time he committed to be their pastor and to split his time between the church and being a broadcaster.

Chris kept that pace up for the next 3 years as he grew a church. He understood that God's calling was to the church and to service, not necessarily to broadcasting.

Let me just say that Pastor Chris has grown that church to a lively congregation that is involved in their community. His senior leadership there has provided the nurturing that is needed for a community to find their calling in life as part of that church. From the beginning of his career as a news anchor, Chris always wanted to give back and to be part of the community. He is surely doing that today.

Today, Pastor Chris continues to do so, and he has followed the simple strategy that remains the mission of the church—preach the word and love people. I think that sums up Pastor Chris—preach the word and love the people.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from North Carolina.

Mr. TILLIS. Mr. President, I appreciate the comments of my colleague, the senior Senator from North Carolina. I welcome Pastor Chris, his lovely wife, and friends of the Steward family who came to visit this great Capitol and to grace us with his presence.

I will give you a different story. I have been to Lee Park. I was there for an annual event, and I was invited

there to be a pimento cheese judge. Let me warn you never to volunteer to taste 29 different varieties of pimento cheese.

Pastor Chris has said that they have refined the event now, but what struck me most about that event is how much the people who were at that event love Pastor Chris and love the Justice family.

You have done a great job in Monroe. We thank you for your service to the great citizens of the State. We thank you for your service to this great body today.

Thank you, Mr. President.

RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority leader is recognized.

ENERGY AND WATER DEVELOPMENT APPROPRIATIONS BILL

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, after much deliberation from both sides of the aisle, today we will complete our work on the Energy and Water appropriations bill. We know this bill is the result of a great deal of effort, research, and collaboration across the aisle. It passed out of the committee unanimously. It was subject to nearly two dozen amendments from both parties on the floor. As Senator ALEXANDER pointed out yesterday, we have clearly had an open process from the start that benefited both sides.

The energy security and water infrastructure bill is important for our country. We know it will support commerce, public safety, waterway infrastructure, energy innovation, and our nuclear deterrence posture.

We know it is important for the way forward on appropriations as well. Remember, following regular order—especially on the appropriations process—allows both Democratic and Republican Members to better represent their

● This "bullet" symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.



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constituents' views. It provides for more open debate and deliberation. It offers a path to reaching a kind of product both sides can support. Empowering Members to make more judicious decisions about how taxpayer dollars are spent is something we should all want. So we know the appropriations process is important.

I urge my colleagues to work together to keep moving these appropriations bills as both sides have expressed interest in doing.

RECOGNITION OF THE MINORITY LEADER

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Democratic leader is recognized.

DONALD TRUMP AND THE REPUBLICAN PARTY

Mr. REID. Mr. President, today the Republican Presidential nominee—it is hard for me to say these words—Donald Trump, comes to Capitol Hill. He secured the party's nomination. He did that last week. Donald Trump will meet privately today with Speaker RYAN and Republican Leader MCCONNELL. It is just the latest sign that Republican leaders in both Houses are marching lockstep with Donald Trump.

Senator MCCONNELL has fully embraced Donald Trump. He said last week when Trump secured the nomination: "I have committed to supporting the nominee chosen by Republican voters."

While speaking with reporters earlier this week, the Republican leader sounded enthusiastic about Trump's chances in the general election. I guess he should be giddy about a Trump Presidency. Donald Trump is everything the Republican leader and his party could ever want in a nomination.

Trump's policy decisions are identical to the Republican Party platform. Today, when they meet in an hour or two, Senator MCCONNELL can discuss that consensus with Trump.

Let's talk about the Supreme Court. Donald Trump and the Senator from Kentucky can talk about their obstruction—for the first time in the history of the country—to a Presidential Supreme Court nomination. It has never happened before. We have had some stalling and a couple of filibusters, but this is one where people didn't want to meet with him. A few of them have broken from that. They certainly don't want to have a hearing, and they don't want to vote.

It was Trump who said Republicans should "delay, delay, delay" filling the Supreme Court vacancy. Following Trump's lead, the Republican leader has personally overseen the blockade of Judge Garland's nomination, forcing Senators to fall in line.

Let's talk about Trump and women. When they get together they can talk about their policy about being anti-woman. Since Senator MCCONNELL has so enthusiastically embraced Trump,

we can only assume he agrees with Trump's view that women are dogs and pigs. We can only assume that the Republican leader is not repulsed by Donald Trump's vulgar behavior towards women. Look at the New York Times story yesterday with his cavorting with Howard Stern and how they talked about women.

After all, the Republican Party has spent years blocking every substantive bill for American women—equal pay for equal work. This Republican Senate has undermined women's health at every turn, trying to turn Planned Parenthood into a punching bag—even though millions and millions of American women have been helped by Planned Parenthood.

They will have an opportunity this morning to talk about the anti-Latino vote. They can discuss their anti-immigrant policies and their agenda. Since the Republican leader is all in for Donald Trump, we can only assume that he approves of Trump's calling immigrants rapists and murderers, and the DREAMers as being mules for drug dealing.

I assume they can have a long discussion about the wall—how high it should be, how they are going to get the Mexicans to pay for the wall—even though most people think the idea is insane.

Let's not forget Republicans have demagogued Latinos and immigrants for decades. They are doing it today.

The Republican leader voted against comprehensive immigration reform.

Under Senator MCCONNELL's leadership, Senate Republicans almost came within hours of shutting down the Department of Homeland Security because of President Obama's executive actions on immigration.

They can talk about their outlook on families. Donald Trump and the Republican leader can mention how little they have done for American families. Except now, in today's news, they are going to cut Medicaid and Medicare. I guess that is because he is getting lined up for the meeting with PAUL RYAN, because that is his No. 1 issue.

Since the Republican leader has firmly established himself in Donald Trump's corner, one can only assume he is OK with Trump's shady business practices. He doesn't mind that Donald Trump rips off hard-working Americans, filed bankruptcy many, many times, and has a university that is corrupt. And the trial will go forward during the election.

Sadly, a disregard for the middle class is an all-too-familiar position for today's Republicans. The Republican Party refuses to address the minimum wage, college affordability, or any other legislation that helps families.

Here is a doozy. They can spend a lot of time talking about climate change. Trump and the Republican leader can, in this private conversation, talk about denial of climate change. But 97 percent of all scientists worldwide believe it is here. It is upon us. Ask the senior Senator from Florida. He will tell you

it is here. Look at what is happening in Miami. You can talk to the Senators from Virginia, and they will tell you what is happening in military bases on the coast of Virginia.

Donald Trump's highest ranking supporter in Congress, Senator MCCONNELL, assumingly agrees with Trump that climate change is a hoax—here is what Trump said—perpetrated by Chinese manufacturers. That position fits with a Republican Party that refuses to acknowledge the environmental and national security threats posed by climate change. If elected, Trump and Senator MCCONNELL would lead the nation backward on a climate change denial agenda that would put polluters first and make the United States the laughingstock of the world.

More than 170 countries have agreed to address climate change because of U.S. leadership, but Trump and MCCONNELL have stated publicly that they will walk away from this.

Let's talk about what Republicans like to talk about—what is happening with the economy—keeping in mind that Bill Clinton balanced the budget. Keep in mind that when George Bush came to the Presidency, there was a \$7 trillion surplus over 10 years. With two wars unpaid for costing trillions of dollars and with tax cuts not being paid for, that surplus has long since gone.

So they can talk about that. They can talk about how Trump has said that he thinks America should default on its debt. Just get the people we owe money to take less money. That is what he said. He doesn't want to pay our national debt. It seems that, on that issue, there is little distance between him and the Republican leader.

Senator MCCONNELL has presided over a Republican caucus that has taken America to the brink of default on a number of occasions, not the least of which is shutting down the government—this great government—shutting it down for 17 days—closed, out of business.

So Donald Trump and the Republican leadership should have a long, long conversation. They have a lot to talk about. At some point in the conversation, Donald Trump should thank the senior Senator from Kentucky. Trump owes his candidacy to the Republican leader and the policies he has led. It was the obstructionist, anti-woman, anti-Latino, anti-Muslim, anti-middle-class, anti-environment, anti-Obama, anti-everything Republican Party during the last 8 years that has made Donald Trump a reality.

I note that no one is on the floor. Will the Chair announce what the Senate is going to do this morning.

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the leadership time is reserved.